

# **ORGANIZERS' HANDBOOK ON Education and Training for Members**

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**International Socialists**

## **NATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM: AN EXPLANATION**

The National Office now has a functioning educational office, and we are in the process of developing a well rounded educational program.

This Handbook is a guide for Branch Organizers and leadership on the training and education procedures for IS members. It is not for use by the entire membership. Only 150 have been produced. The amount allotted to the branch should be kept by the organizer and given only to those who need them: the organizer, comrade in charge of training and education, class leaders, etc. The Handbook will be updated regularly as necessary.

Included are: 1) steps toward the integration, training and education of new members; 2) instructions for on-going education for all members; 3) the plan for the Summer School following the 1976 National Convention.

The Summer School plan requires the immediate attention of all organizers.

This Handbook supercedes all other directives and suggestions sent out from the National Secretary's Office in various National Reports.

The Revised Basic Education Program will be sent out with Workers Power on April 2.

All questions, comments, suggestions should be directed to Marilyn at the National Office.

## BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

The revised Basic Education Program will be out to the branches on April 2. The number of classes has been reduced from 10 to 6. In addition to combining several of the classes, other small changes have been made in the texts based on feedback from the organization.

The most common problem comrades reported on was regular attendance at the classes. It is very important from the beginning to explain to new members why these classes are required and how taking them will help them to become more effective members. The meeting time and place should be set in the beginning and maintained everytime. The class leader should call the class members the day before the class to remind them and be sure that they have transportation, childcare, etc. In other words, we must do everything to ensure that the classes actually take place.

In the revised edition there will be changes in the introduction that will improve the classes, as well as questions following each class which should help the class leader and members focus the discussion. All other direction in the use of this series will be included in this introduction.

Remember, this class series is as much a part of the integration of new members as their fraction work, branch meetings, etc.

## ADVANCED CLASS SERIES

The advanced class series is designed around 6 pamphlets. Its purpose is to provide for the continued political development of the membership on some basic theoretical questions. The main questions covered are: 1) The Russian Revolution, 2) the defeat of the Russian Revolution, 3) class struggle unionism, 4) the state, 5) party and class, 6) Marxist economics. It also provides an introduction to Marx and Lenin, and hopefully will encourage comrades to read and discuss other "classics". There is a page on each pamphlet following this introduction to the series, that lays out the most important political questions to be covered in the class, as well as ideas on how to make the class relevant. Each class leader should go over these carefully with the pamphlet and introduce the next class/pamphlet at the end of the class so that the comrades taking the class will have some guidance while they are preparing.

This class series is to be used following the completion of the Basic Education Program. It is not required, however, all comrades should be strongly urged to take it. It should meet bi-weekly, separate from branch or fraction meetings, be limited to 6/7 members, with the following format: A fifteen minute or so presentation by the class leader, an hour of discussion, 5-10minute summation, and a brief introduction to the next class. This introduction should go over the important points contained on the sheet for that class.

ADVANCED CLASS SERIES: SUMMARY OF THE IMPORTANT POINTS TO BE COVERED  
IN EACH OF THE CLASSES

First Class: Pamphlet - The Politics of Lenin by Ginsborg (mike)

The major topic of this pamphlet is an introduction to the history of the Russian Revolution. Even though the section on the revolution itself is relatively short, the other sections back it up since everything Lenin wrote focused on the real problems of building a revolutionary party and successfully making a working class revolution in Russia and Europe in general. This class should concentrate on the development of the revolution in Russia, and the role of the Bolshevik Party in the process of the revolution. Comrades should come out of the class with an understanding of how the working class moves in a revolutionary situation, the necessity of real leadership (the party), what the party learns from the working class (Soviets in 1905), why taking over factories or parliament is not enough (the role of the state), how a revolutionary leader functions (Lenin and his functioning demonstrates how democratic centralism operates in practice), and internationalism (the necessity to spread the revolution to Western Europe).

Why the revolution failed should be left to the next class where it will be taken up in full.

Second Class: Pamphlet - How the Revolution Was Lost by Harmon (Mike T)

Emphasis in this class must go to why the revolution failed in Russia (lack of revolution in Western Europe, the decimation of the Russian working class in the civil war and imperialist invasion), and how Stalinism developed. One important point is how the democratic relationship between the party and the class ensures that the party won't substitute itself for the working class, and conversely why the decimation of the working class in Russia was one of the things that made it possible for Stalinism to arise. This pamphlet is also the place to go into the whole question of Trotsky vs. Stalin and why we're Trotskyists (Role of the Left Opposition), and the political differences between Stalinism and Trotskyism (revolutionary Marxism).

Another important part of this class should be the role of the peasantry: what the self-interests of the peasantry is, why it is different from the class aims of the working class, and finally, why a workers revolution cannot be based upon the peasantry.

Lastly, The class should discuss the different aspects of what Stalinism is: Socialism in one country, and what that meant, why Stalin had to physically destroy his opposition, and why the Stalinist ruling classes are as threatened by workers revolution as the capitalist ruling classes are. The class leader should bring Maoism into this class as a type of Stalinism.

Third Class: Pamphlet - Fighting to Win IS pamphlet

The goal of this class is to go into in depth, our trade union perspective. It is important that the class leader go into how and why unions developed from institutions of workers struggle in this country in the 1930's to the "cooperative" organizations they are today - (prosperity, McCarthyism and the witchhunt atmosphere of the 50's), and the fact that today most of the top union officials never worked on the job, live like the bosses, get paid like the bosses so that their interests are different from those of the workers they're supposed to represent in the class struggle "Being determines consciousness!"

Then go into what class struggle unionism is: fighting for workers' interests; opposition

## Advanced class series, summary of the classes, continued

at every point of workers interests and bosses interests, why democratic rank and file control of the union is not simply a nice thing, but the only way for the rank and file to have an effective fighting union, the role of racism and sexism and how the bosses use them, and why if they're not fought everyone, not just blacks and women, loses. Why national and international solidarity are important (including the reactionary nature of "buy American"), what the Democratic Party really is, why it sells out the working class, and so, why workers need their own party; and finally - what all of this is about - workers control of industry and the state and the fight for socialism as the only way to finally win the war!

### Fourth Class: Pamphlet - State and Revolution by Lenin

This is probably the most readable and popular of Lenin's pamphlets. There are many very important ideas included. For our purposes in this class series, the class should concentrate on the following points:

The most important point to get across is the role of the state under capitalism and why the state cannot be ignored - why it must be destroyed! Here is the time to go into "armed bodies of men" - the police, national guard; congress and its role, the bureaucratic apparatus of the state and how it functions. Bring in Watergate and the revelations about the CIA, FBI etc to make this all clear. Get across clearly why none of the capitalist institutions are neutral, that their supposed "neutrality" is just a part of bourgeois democracy, and why they will wind up defending the capitalist system.

Secondly, here is the chance to go into what bourgeois democracy really is - democracy for the ruling class, subjugation for the rest of us.

Thirdly, explain and achieve an understanding in the class of what the dictatorship of the proletariat is. This is one of the least generally understood concepts in Marxist theory, and this pamphlet is excellent for explaining it. Comrades should come out of the class understanding what it is, why it's necessary, why it's not a dictatorship in the sense that word is usually understood (an autocratic government, etc), and how it differs from capitalist governments (rule by the majority - the working class, leadership bodies that are working bodies, not talk shops, where representatives are immediately recallable, etc.).

Finally you should go into what communism really is, and why the state "whitens away" If this is done well and clearly, the comrades taking the class will come away with a real Marxist understanding of what the state is and what its role is.

### Fifth Class: Pamphlet - Party and Class by Harman

This class follows clearly from the previous 4 classes by drawing out clearly our conception of the revolutionary party in theory and practice: why it's necessary (the unevenness of working class consciousness), and its relationship to the working class and the class wide institutions workers develop in the course of the revolutionary struggle (workers' councils as the basis of the workers' state). Class leaders should draw on the examples and ideas learned in the previous classes in this discussion.

One of the most important concepts to get across is the political way the party intervenes in the class struggle to advance the struggle and at the same time the political way the class struggle itself corrects the party. This is the essence of the political relationship between the

Advanced class series, summary of the classes, continued

two. It crucial to a basic understanding of our politics.

The social democratic party and the Stalinist party are both forms of substituting the party for the class, although in very different ways. The differences between the two, and the difference between them and the revolutionary Leninist conception of the party are what we need to get across in this class.

Sixth Class: Pamphlet - Wage, Labor and Capital by Marx

The last class provides an introduction to Marxist economics. The pamphlet lays bare in clear form the exact way the capitalist system functions to exploit the working class. Here comrades can begin to understand the labor theory of value, and how that theory strips away all the mystic of social relations under capitalism. It explains materially why the interests of the workers is always diametrically opposed to the interests of the bosses.

The class leader must also bring out the internal contradictions of the system itself - how capitalism must continue to expand to exist, and how there are real limits to that expansion - hence the periodic crises that become more and more violent with the growth of the system.

Lastly is the key point that Marx makes throughout the pamphlet must be brought out and discussed fully: that the fastest growth of capital creates the best conditions for the working class - but it does so only by further enriching the capitalists relative to the workers. Hence - there is no way for workers to win but by getting rid of the system itself!

Seventh class: Evaluation

Following the class series, there should be a last class that evaluates the entire series and encourages the comrades in the class to continue their political education through one on one reading with another comrade. The evaluation should take up the problems in the class and the good points, with both the class x leader and the members taking part. A summary of this discussion is to be written up and sent in to me at the NO. This will provide feedback so that we can develop other classes along this nature.

## "EDUCATIONAL NOTES"

Beginning the first of April, the National Office will be producing a monthly political bulletin entitled "Educational Notes". It will contain 2-3 articles of about 1500 words in length covering current political questions. The purpose of this bulletin is to provide a means for continuing political education on a national level for the organization.

"Educational Notes" is to be the basis of educational discussions for branch or fraction meetings. It must be used regularly and consistently - it is not optional.

The politics of the topics will come from discussions on the National Executive Committee, which will make it more possible for the membership to keep abreast of the national leadership's analysis of important political events locally and internationally. It will be edited by the National Education Officer.

The first issue will have two articles: one by Dave F on current developments in Southern Africa, especially Zimbabwe, and one by Gay S. based on an EC discussion on the political significance of the presidential primaries to date.



## OTHER EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

In addition to the Basic Education Program, the Advanced Class Series, and "Educational Notes", there will be other training and educational procedures made available.

### Cadre Training

We are re-initiating cadre training in Detroit. It will be organized from the center and set up as comrades come through over a 3-4 day period. In most cases individual comrades will be encouraged to come to the NO for this training, although some classes may have to be given in the branches with guidance from Detroit. The classes will be geared to the level of political development of the comrade taking the classes. The series will cover the political questions facing the organization, as well as several of the more basic theoretical questions. The Education Officer will confer with the organizer on individual comrades we want to have this training. With a week's notice, however, I can provide some training for any comrade coming through the center for several days as long as the visit doesn't coincide with an NC or other National meeting. Organizers should inform the branches of this service, and the requirement of a week's notice.

report

### Branch Schools

Branch Schools of one-half to 1 day will be organized from the center in coordination with the organizer periodically. These schools will combine technical and organizational training with the key political questions at that time.

### One on One

All Organizers or Branch Educational Officers should have procedures for a one on one educational program for comrades interested in doing reading/discussion on specific topics. This program should be available to any branch member. The organizing of it is simply a matter of matching the comrade interested with another more developed comrade on that specific topic.

## INTEGRATION OF NEW MEMBERS: THE BUDDY SYSTEM

The most important strategy for the integration and holding of new members is the buddy system. To date it has been implemented very poorly, if at all. This will now change. The following procedure is to be followed for each new member, no matter how long he/she has been around the organization.

Simply put, the buddy system is a way of ensuring that someone is systematically thinking about what someone else (a new comrade) is going through as a member of IS. It's a way of making sure that our new comrades are, in fact, being recruited to the politics of the IS and to our strategies for functioning as conscious revolutionaries in the rank and file movement. It is how we make sure that newer comrades develop the confidence they need to recruit their friends and co-workers to the IS. Though no one person can absolutely guarantee that a new comrade will stay in the IS and recruit other workers, it's the job of his or her buddy to do everything possible to make sure this happens.

Each new member will be assigned a more experienced member for the first 3 months of membership after which the situation will be reviewed by the organizer/exec. The buddy will meet with the new member once a week (at a time convenient for the new member) to go over the various items listed below.

Within one week of joining the organizer and buddy will go over IS procedures, security, membership responsibilities (workplace organizing, democratic centralism, IS recruitment, attending meetings and activities, selling WP, paying dues, taking the Basic Education Program.)

The buddy will cover the following regularly with the new member:

- I. Take an active part in the political education and training of the new comrade:
  - a) Stay in touch with the new comrade about his experience in the Basic Education Program. Discuss what he/she's learning and communicate problems or criticisms about the class series or the classes themselves to the person responsible.
  - b) Within one month, set aside time to discuss in detail two pamphlets with the new comrade: The IS and How It Works and Taking Care of Business.
  - c) Help the comrade develop a recruitment strategy for friends and co-workers. Discuss questions they ask about socialism and the IS. For example, you're the person this comrade comes to ask, "What do I say when \_\_\_\_\_ says workers aren't smart enough to run society?"
  - d) Discuss WP stories or articles that make important points about women's oppression, racism, the economy, etc. or point out those that'd be especially good for the comrade to talk about with contacts.
  - e) A crucial part of the training of new comrades is their ongoing work in the branch and fraction. Find out about every assignment the new comrade is given (and make sure he/she is given assignments). Discuss these in detail. More than this, offer to work with the comrade at first, especially if it's something he/she's never done or has to do along.

## The buddy system, continued

2. As the comrade's buddy it is important that you are available as someone to whom the new comrade can turn with every question or problem: things he/she doesn't understand about how the branch, fraction, etc functions, what the roles of different comrades in the branch/fraction are, our "line" on a particular issue, unfamiliar terms, etc.

a) Let fraction conveners, exec members, the organizer know about special problems, particular interests or development needs of the new comrade. This kind of feedback is important if we are going to grow in collective ability to teach and learn in this process of integrating new members.

b) Make sure there are plenty of informal contexts for discussion – have dinner before meetings or go out for a drink together afterwards.

c) Sit with this comrade at every meeting the two of you have in common. That's your chance to explain unfamiliar terms or abbreviations and to encourage him/her to speak up and ask questions no matter how small.

d) Be sensitive to the family, social life, etc responsibilities of the new member. When our activities and demands on the new comrade conflict with these other things, let the organizer/exec know. Help work out new ways to integrate activities of the branch with the lives of its members. The newer worker comrades will teach us the most about how to do this effectively, and it's their buddies who must see to it that the organization as a whole learns.

e) Make sure in your first meeting with your buddy that he/she knows when meetings are, where they are, and that her/his childcare or transportation needs have been met.

3. Make sure that you become familiar with the workplace or trade union situation the new comrade is in. Preferably the buddy should be in the same fraction. Encourage him/her to share experiences, to bring out problems encountered at work. Explore the possibility with the organizer/exec of the organization supporting the comrade's workplace or union struggles in some way (when there's no fraction for that work).

## SUMMER SCHOOL 1976

The following is the plan adopted by the EC for the summer school following the 1976 Convention. There is still time for input from the branches on additional classes which will meet real needs. In order to have suggestions considered they must be in to me no later than Friday, April 9. I also need by that date a provisional number on who plans to attend the school (not names, but an estimated number from each branch). See the form at the end of the plan for sending in this information.

**DATES:** Tuesday, July 6-Saturday, July 10

**PLACE:** Camp site in one of the nearby state parks outside of Detroit

The political theme of the school will be revolutionaries in the working class - building the revolutionary party. The form of the school will be a clear break with our past summer schools. In line with other changes in the organization, we can no longer hold schools of any sort where the only form is a long presentation and discussion. Rather we must offer a variety of classes, discussions ranging from cadre classes on political topics such as Angola to technical and organizational tasks like selling Workers Power, building public IS meetings, recruitment, as well as basic questions facing many of our worker members such as how and when to use government agencies, red baiting, etc.

Each class will be limited to 10 people. If more wish to take the same class, another one will be set up. There will be several different kinds of classes and activities going on at the same time. We will also use a variety of forms for these classes - films, slide shows, skits, role playing as well as short presentations all followed by discussion.

The schedule will be sent out in advance and everyone coming will be asked to sign up for what they're interested in with political guidance from the organizer/exec.

There will be scheduled classes in the mornings and afternoons of around 2 hours for each. After dinner there will be political films such as Blow for Blow followed by informal political discussion.

Below is a list of the classes at this time. They are divided into the three categories outlined above.

### Political cadre classes

1. Building the revolutionary party: Revolutionary, social democratic, and stalinist theories.
2. Leninism: methodology and Lenin as a revolutionary leader
3. Black liberation and workers revolution - building a multi-national revolutionary party.
4. Political lessons of the TDC
5. Revolutionaries in the labor movement: Minneapolis, UAW and lessons for us now.
6. Southern Africa and Angola: national liberation and revolution - theory and practice
7. The Portuguese Revolution - the role of the PRP
8. Democratic Party: its role and significance, our perspectives, the election and beyond
9. Busing: politics, significance of the issue, assessment of our work, perspectives
10. Economic perspectives - the crisis.

### IS Organizational/technical classes

1. Recruitment: Building a political relationship with contacts and recruiting them from our work
2. Workers Power: How to sell it, turn buyers into sellers and generally use it in our work

Summer School, continued

3. Building a public IS meeting (publicity, hall, chairing, discussion, sects, etc.)
4. Branch education and the integration of new members

Classes on operating in the unions/industrial work

1. Red baiting: what it is, how it's used, and how to fight it
2. How to fight union/company intimidation, firings and the use of the government agencies (NLRB, EEOC, FEPC)
3. Union stewards - when and how to run, basic problems of operating as a revolutionary and as a steward
4. Building rank and file caucuses: common problems and how to deal with them.

Below is an example of how one morning session would look and what choices would be available:

Choose one:

Building the revolutionary party-----

How to sell and use Workers Power

Union stewards-----

Busing-----

All comrades would choose one of these for this time, organizers should steer comrades to one or another based upon their need. The afternoon session would be similar, and the evening would be a film, informal discussion.

Time Table

3/18: Proposal out to the organization

4/9: All suggestions in plus tentative numbers attending

4/16: Revised list of topics for classes out to the organization with suggested reading where necessary and assignment of comrades to run/give the classes.

6/1: Who's coming provisionally and final classes out

7/1: Final organization of the school in terms of reservations, scheduling and who is in what class.

All organizers are required to attend, and there will be a separate school for the organizers (1 day or a couple of sessions) run by the National Secretary. There will, of course, be good food, music, at least one real party, plenty of fun recreation, as well as adequate childcare.

See separate sheet for the promised form!

**SUMMER SCHOOL**

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO MARILYN AT THE NATIONAL OFFICE NO LATER THAN APRIL 9, 1976. If it is not in by then, you loose your chance for any imput into the school, and I will be forced to harass you for the tentative numbers planni ng to attend the school.**

**NAME OF BRANCH** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUGGESTED CLASSES** \_\_\_\_\_

**NUMBER INITIALLY PLANNING TO ATTEND** (Note: this is just to get a general idea, not the final count!) \_\_\_\_\_. How many are older branch members (one year or more in the organization) \_\_\_\_\_. How many are newer branch members (less than one year in the organization) \_\_\_\_\_.

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCHOOL**